

REMARKS

This Request For Continued Examination (RCE) and Amendment is in response to the final Office Action dated January 25, 2005.

The Amendments To The Specification and Figures

Applicants have amended the specification at various locations to improve the form of the specification.

In particular, Applicants have amended the specification at page 3, line 28, by adding reference numeral 108 in association with the disclosed fax service in order to identify the disclosed fax service in Figure 1. Applicants have similarly amended the specification at page 7, line 21, by adding reference numeral 608 in association with the disclosed fax service in order to identify the disclosed fax service in Figure 6.

Applicants have submitted a Request For Approval Of Drawing Change concurrently with this Request For Continued Examination and Amendment. The Request For Approval Of Drawing Change includes three (3) sheets of drawings having proposed changes indicated by circles.

Applicants request approval of a change to Figure 1 by addition of Fax Service 108, which is coupled to network 104. Support for the requested change to Figure 1 can be found in the specification at, for example, page 3, lines 27-29.

Applicants also request approval to a change to Figure 4 by addition of an arrowhead pointing from box 414 to box 434. Support for the requested change to Figure 4 can be found in the specification at, for example, page 6, lines 29-31.

Lastly regarding requested changes to the drawings, Applicants request approval of a change to Figure 6 by addition of Fax Service 608, which is coupled to network 604. Support for the requested change to Figure 6 can be found in the specification at, for example, page 7, lines 21-22.

In anticipation of approval to the requested changes to the drawings, Applicants have submitted herewith a Submission of Replacement Drawing Sheets with the three drawings sheets for which changes have been requested.

The Amendments To The Claims

The previously pending claims have been cancelled and have been replaced by new claims 20-40 that have a better form in accordance with U.S. patent law. Support for new claims 20-40 can be found throughout the specification and the originally filed claims. In particular, support for new claims 20-40 can be found at page 2, lines 16-23, page 3, lines 19-30, page 4, lines 11-14, page 4, lines 25-32, page 7, lines 21-27.

The Rejection Based on Matsumoto

Claims 1-10 and 17-19 were finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Matsumoto et al. (Matsumoto), U.S. Patent No. 6,373,598. As described above, claims 1-10 and 17-19 were cancelled and replaced by new claims 20-40.

Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention according to any of claims 20-40 is patentable over Matsumoto.

Matsumoto discloses a facsimile machine that connects to a service station for downloading an application software and installing the application software on the hard disk of a personal computer that is coupled to the facsimile machine. (See Matsumoto, column 7, lines 23-27.) When the facsimile machine and the service station are connected, the facsimile machine sends a registration ID code to the service station. (See Matsumoto, column 7, lines 37-39.) When the service station validates the received registration ID code, at least one application software is sent to the facsimile machine. (See Matsumoto, column 7, lines 43-45.) When the sending of the application software is complete, the facsimile machine and the service station are disconnected and the downloaded application software is installed on the hard disk of the personal computer. (See Matsumoto, column 7, lines 48-51.)

Applicants respectfully submit that Matsumoto does not disclose or suggest a method for performing a facsimile-based operation over a communications network that includes connecting a sending facsimile system to a network-based facsimile service, requesting the network-based facsimile service to establish a connection over the communications network between the sending facsimile system and a recipient facsimile system, and performing a facsimile-based operation between the sending facsimile system and the recipient facsimile system over the communications network, as required by new claim 20. As demonstrated above, Matsumoto relates to downloading an

application software for a facsimile machine from a service station and installing the downloaded application software on a hard disk of a personal computer that is connected to the facsimile machine.

Thus, new claim 20 is allowable over Matsumoto. It follows that new claims 21-26, which each incorporate the limitations of new claim 20, are each allowable over Matsumoto for at least the same reasons that new claim 20 is considered allowable.

Regarding new claim 27, Applicants respectfully submit that Matsumoto does not disclose or suggest a method for enabling a facsimile-based operation over a communications network that includes receiving a request at a network-based facsimile service from a first facsimile system for performing a facsimile-based operation between the first facsimile system and a second facsimile system over a communications network, such that the request includes information relating to a network-address associated with the first facsimile system and identification information relating to the second facsimile system, and enabling the facsimile-based operation by establishing a connection over the communications network between the first facsimile system and the second facsimile system under control of the network-based facsimile service. As demonstrated above, Matsumoto relates to downloading an application software for a facsimile machine from a service station and installing the downloaded application software on a hard disk of a personal computer that is connected to the facsimile machine.

Thus, new claim 27 is allowable over Matsumoto. It follows that new claims 28-33, which each incorporate the limitations of new claim 27, are each allowable over Matsumoto for at least the same reasons that new claim 27 is considered allowable.

Regarding new claim 34, Applicants respectfully submit that Matsumoto does not disclose or suggest a computer-readable medium that includes computer-executable instructions for a method for performing a facsimile-based operation over a communications network, such that the method includes connecting from a sending facsimile system to a network-based facsimile service, requesting the network-based facsimile service to establish a connection over the communications network between the sending facsimile system and a recipient facsimile system, and performing a facsimile-based operation between the sending facsimile system and the recipient facsimile system over the communications network. As demonstrated above, Matsumoto relates to downloading an application software for a facsimile machine from a service station and

installing the downloaded application software on a hard disk of a personal computer that is connected to the facsimile machine.

Thus, new claim 34 is allowable over Matsumoto. It follows that new claims 35-40, which each incorporate the limitations of new claim 34, are each allowable over Matsumoto for at least the same reasons that new claim 34 is considered allowable.

Accordingly, new claims 20-40 are allowable over Matsumoto.

The Rejection Based on Bloomfield

Claims 11-16 were finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Bloomfield, U.S. Patent No. 6,025,931. As described above, claims 11-16 were cancelled and replaced by new claims 20-40.

Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention according to any of claims 20-40 is patentable over Bloomfield.

Bloomfield discloses a fax-to-email system that permits a hardcopy document to be from a facsimile machine through a data network, such as the Internet, to a recipient via electronic mail rather than to another facsimile machine. (See Bloomfield, column 1, lines 63-67.)

Applicants respectfully submit that Bloomfield does not disclose or suggest a method for performing a facsimile-based operation over a communications network that includes connecting a sending facsimile system to a network-based facsimile service, requesting the network-based facsimile service to establish a connection over the communications network between the sending facsimile system and a recipient facsimile system, and performing a facsimile-based operation between the sending facsimile system and the recipient facsimile system over the communications network, as required by new claim 20. As demonstrated above, Bloomfield relates to a fax-to-email system that permits a hardcopy document to be from a facsimile machine through a data network, such as the Internet, to a recipient via electronic mail rather than to another facsimile machine.

Thus, new claim 20 is allowable over Bloomfield. It follows that new claims 21-26, which each incorporate the limitations of new claim 20, are each allowable over Bloomfield for at least the same reasons that new claim 20 is considered allowable.

Regarding new claim 27, Applicants respectfully submit that Bloomfield does not disclose or suggest a method for enabling a facsimile-based operation over a communications network that includes receiving a request at a network-based facsimile service from a first facsimile system for performing a facsimile-based operation between the first facsimile system and a second facsimile system over a communications network, such that the request includes information relating to a network-address associated with the first facsimile system and identification information relating to the second facsimile system, and enabling the facsimile-based operation by establishing a connection over the communications network between the first facsimile system and the second facsimile system under control of the network-based facsimile service. As demonstrated above, Bloomfield relates to a fax-to-email system that permits a hardcopy document to be from a facsimile machine through a data network, such as the Internet, to a recipient via electronic mail rather than to another facsimile machine.

Thus, new claim 27 is allowable over Bloomfield. It follows that new claims 28-33, which each incorporate the limitations of new claim 27, are each allowable over Bloomfield for at least the same reasons that new claim 27 is considered allowable.

Regarding new claim 34, Applicants respectfully submit that Bloomfield does not disclose or suggest a computer-readable medium that includes computer-executable instructions for a method for performing a facsimile-based operation over a communications network, such that the method includes connecting from a sending facsimile system to a network-based facsimile service, requesting the network-based facsimile service to establish a connection over the communications network between the sending facsimile system and a recipient facsimile system, and performing a facsimile-based operation between the sending facsimile system and the recipient facsimile system over the communications network. As demonstrated above, Bloomfield relates to a fax-to-email system that permits a hardcopy document to be from a facsimile machine through a data network, such as the Internet, to a recipient via electronic mail rather than to another facsimile machine.

Thus, new claim 34 is allowable over Bloomfield. It follows that new claims 35-40, which each incorporate the limitations of new claim 34, are each allowable over Bloomfield for at least the same reasons that new claim 34 is considered allowable.

Accordingly, new claims 20-40 are allowable over Bloomfield.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and arguments, it is urged that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner find that a telephonic or personal interview would expedite passage to issue of the present application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

A Fee Transmittal Sheet containing an authorization to charge a deposit account in payment of one dependent claim in excess of the claims previously paid for has been submitted concurrently with this Request For Continued Examination and Amendment.

A Request For Approval Of Drawing Change and a Submission of Replacement Drawing Sheets with the three drawings sheets for which changes have been requested have been submitted concurrently with this Request For Continued Examination and Amendment.

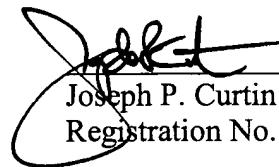
A petition for the necessary extension of time to file this response having an attached check and an authorization to charge a deposit account in payment of the applicable extension fee has been submitted concurrently with this Request For Continued Examination and Amendment.

A general authorization under 37 C.F.R. § 1.25(b), second sentence, is hereby given to credit or debit Deposit Account No. 50-0803 for the instant filing and for any other fees during the pendency of this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16, 1.17 and 1.18.

It is requested that this application be passed to issue with claims 20-40.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: April 28, 2005



Joseph P. Curtin
Registration No. 34,571

Sharp Laboratories of America, Inc.
5750 N.W. Pacific Rim Blvd.
Camas, WA 98607

Telephone: (360) 817-8488
Facsimile: (360) 817-8505

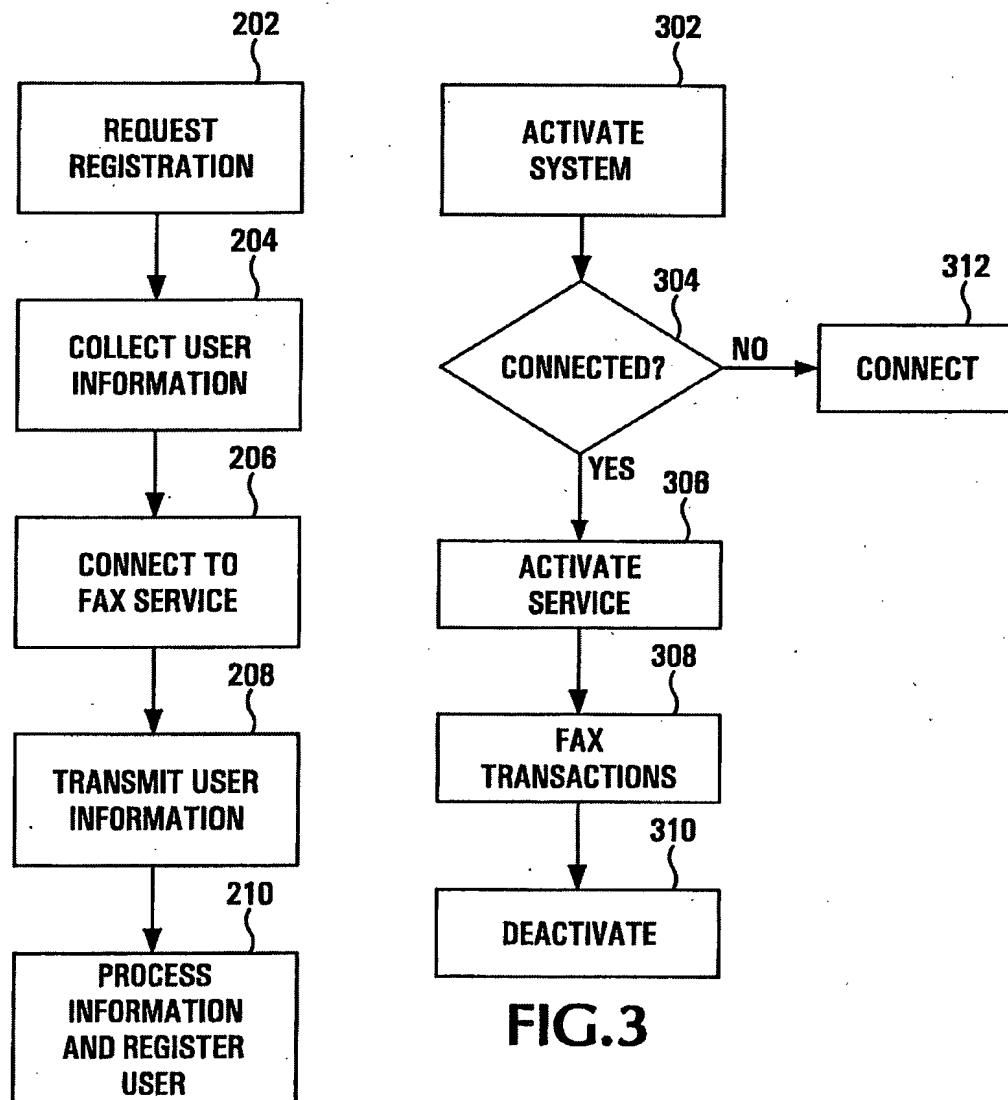
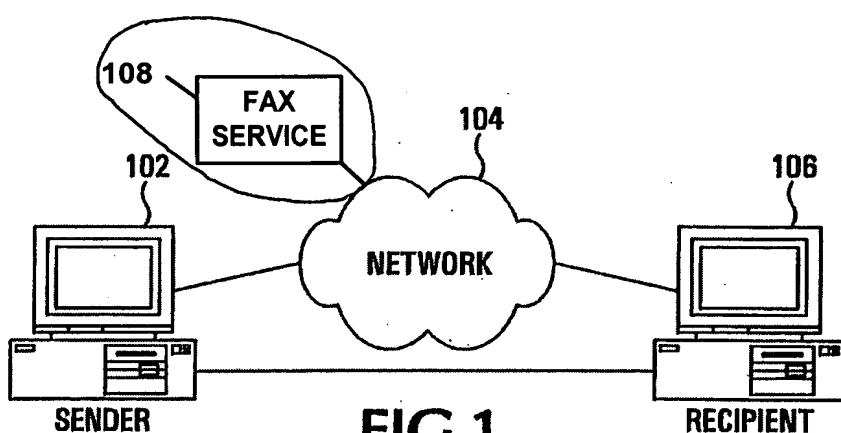
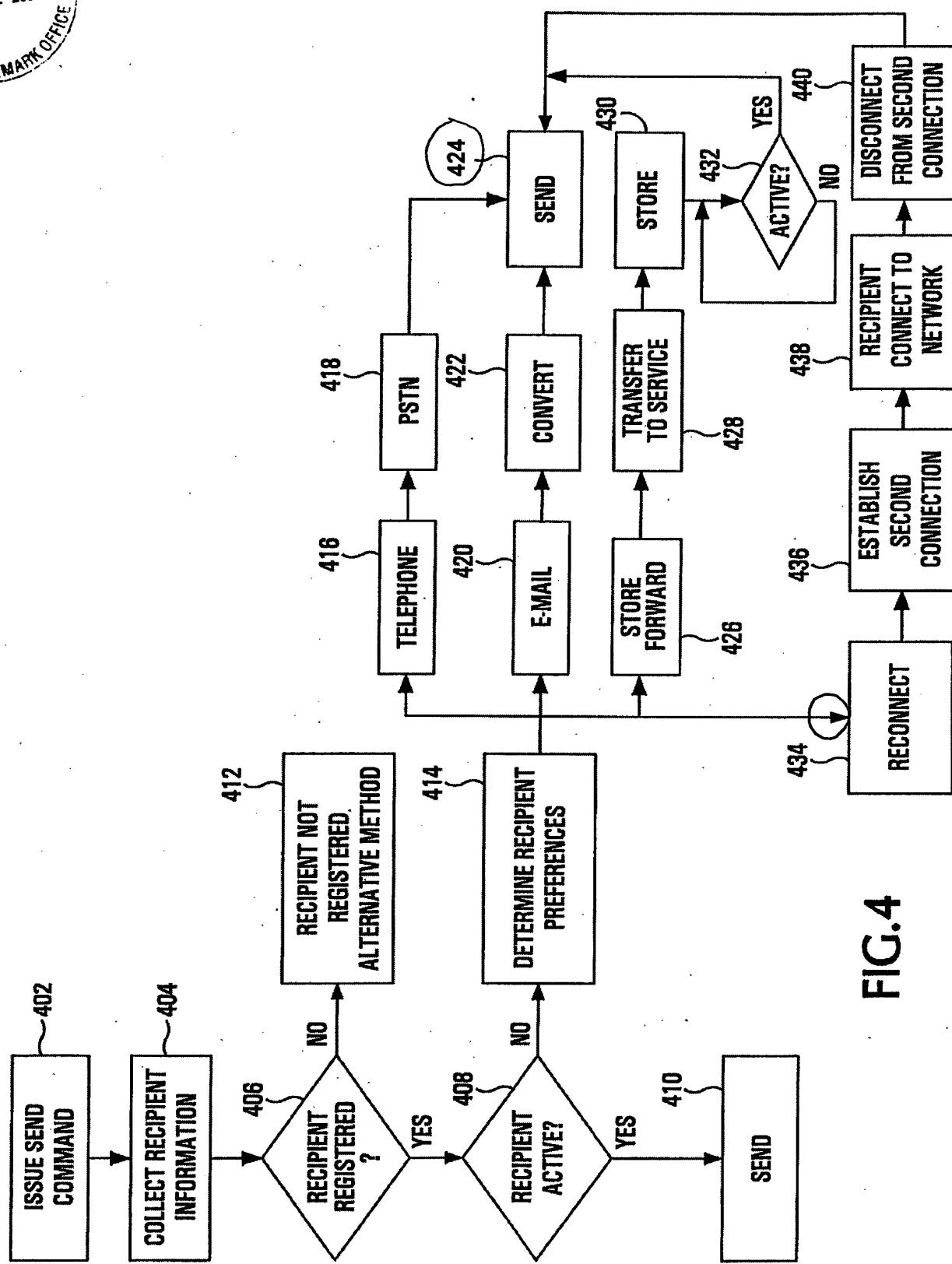


FIG.2



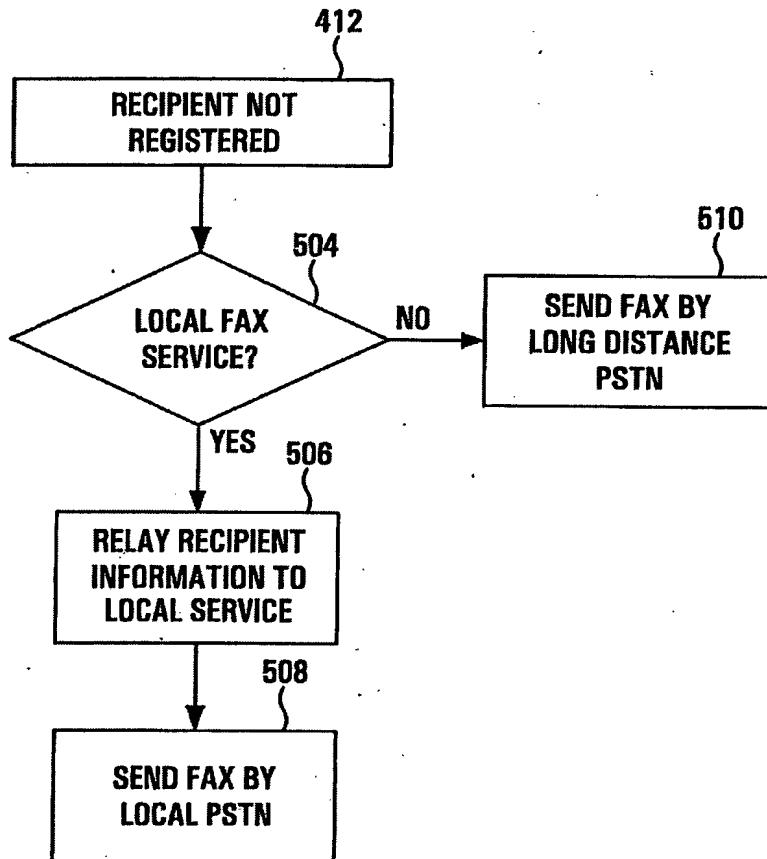


FIG.5

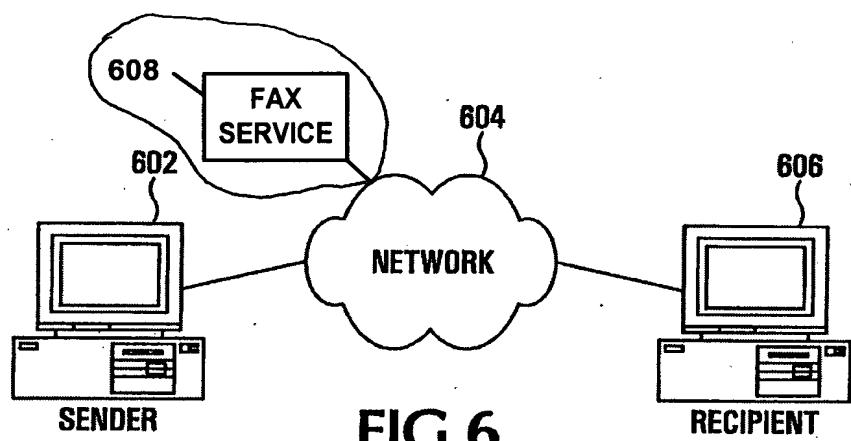


FIG.6